

Message Text

SECRET

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61

ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY: S/S-O:P. JOHNSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 127520 TOSEC 020219

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 3905 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
AMMAN ABU DHABI BEIRUT CAIRO DAMASCUS DOHA KUWAIT
MANAMA TEL AVIV DHAHRAN 01 JUNE.

QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 3905

EXDIS

BEIRUT ALSO FOR BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, US, XF

SUBJECT: LETTER OF 76 SENATORS TO PRESIDENT FORD

1. SAUDI MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRINCE
SAUDI TOLD THE AMBASSADOR MAY 31 THAT THE TONE
AND TEXT OF THE LETTER SENT BY 76 SENATORS TO
PRESIDENT FORD LED THEM TO THE CONCLUSION THAT
IT HAD BEEN DRAFTED BY THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN
WASHINGTON. SAUDI SAID THE TIMING WAS EXTREMELY
GOOD IF THE SENATORS (AND ISRAEL) WANTED TO ABORT
PRESIDENT FORD'S AND SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PEACE
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EFFORTS.

2. THE SAUDIS AND ALL THE OTHER ARABS, SAUDI SAID, ARE WILLING TO REACH PEACE WITH ISRAEL IF IT GIVES UP ITS 1967 CONQUESTS. THE LETTER FROM THE SENATORS WILL CONVINCE ISRAEL THAT IT HAS NOW SUCCESSFULLY BYPASSED THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION. SAUD SAID HE HAD NOTED RECENT STATEMENTS BY ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER RABIN THAT ISRAEL WOULD "NEVER" GIVE UP GOLAN, THAT UNIFIED JERUSALEM MUST REMAIN "FOREVER" ISRAELI AND THAT ISRAEL IS PLANNING NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK, IN GOLAN AND SINAI.

3. SAUD SAID THAT HE AND OTHER SAUDI OFFICIALS HAD DISCUSSED THE LETTER WITH SENATOR KENNEDY, WHO HAD SIGNED THE LETTER. KENNEDY ASSURED THEM IT WAS AN INTERNAL POLITICAL PLOY AND WAS NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. SAUD SAID THAT THEY THOUGHT THIS ANSWER "WAS NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY." THEY ALSO RAISED IT WITH SENATOR BAKER WHO HAD NOT SIGNED THE LETTER AND WHO AGREED WITH THEIR ANALYSIS. BAKER TOLD THEM HE TOO THOUGHT THE TONE AND TIMING OF THE LETTER WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE. IT WAS ALSO DISCUSSED WITH SENATOR ABOUREZK, WHO OUTDID THE SAUDIS IN INDIGNATION.

4. SAUD SAID THE U.S. SENATE SEEMED TO BE BEHIND PUBLIC OPINION. THE AMERICANS AS A WHOLE- IF THE POLLS ARE TO BE BELIEVED - ARE CONSIDERABLY LESS DISPOSED THAN IS THE SENATE TO UNDERWRITE ISRAELI TERRITORIAL CONQUESTS. SAUD AND, LATER IN THE DAY, CROWN PRINCE FAHD SAID THEY WERE STILL COUNTING ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ASSURANCES THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD REMAIN FIRM, AND WOULD NOT YIELD TO ISRAELI PRESSURE UNTIL ISRAEL SHOWED FLEXIBILITY IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ARABS.
AKINS UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

SECRET

NNN

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